



AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

Population: Question on Marital Status (P-4)

FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL USES OF DATA ABOUT MARITAL STATUS

- The Department of Education uses these data to develop program strategies for single parents.
- The Department of Health and Human Services uses these data for research to evaluate family planning programs aimed at specific populations.
- The Department of Housing and Urban Development requires state and local governments to have a Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy. This plan requires an inventory of housing units compared with an assessment of the needs of families residing in the jurisdiction.
- Businesses and community organizations use these data to determine the need for products, services and activities based on population characteristics of an area.
- State and local governments, faith-based and other non-profit organizations, and businesses use these data to plan, budget,

EXAMPLES OF LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR DATA ABOUT MARITAL STATUS

- Child Welfare Act
- Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996
- Public Health Service Act

QUESTION AS IT APPEARS IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE

4 What is this person's marital status?

☐ Now married

☐ Widowed

☐ Divorced

☐ Separated

☐ Never married

[<www.census.gov/acs/www>](http://www.census.gov/acs/www)

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Helping You Make Informed Decisions



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HISTORY OF THE MARITAL STATUS QUESTION

- The question on marital status has been asked since 1880.
- The question also was asked on the Census 2000 long-form questionnaire.

WHY WE ASK IT THIS WAY

Each category provides important information since the social, economic, and demographic conditions of the population can vary significantly by marital status. For instance, people who respond as widowed or never married differ in Social Security and pension/survivor benefits which can carry significant financial and social implications.

WHAT IS THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY?

The American Community Survey (ACS) is a nationwide survey that collects socioeconomic and housing information and is the planned replacement for the long form in the 2010 Census.

The U.S. Census Bureau plans to conduct the ACS in every county, American Indian and Alaska Native Area, Hawaiian Home Land and in Puerto Rico, once it is fully implemented, pending Congressional funding. The ACS has been tested across the country since 1996.

HOW CAN I SEE THE RESULTS OF THE SURVEY?

The information collected from these tests is published on the Census Bureau's Web site at:

<www.census.gov/acs/www>

and American FactFinder at:

<<http://factfinder.census.gov>>

For more information call, e-mail, or visit our Web site:

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<<http://www.census.gov/acs/www>>

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